

No matter what other sports take place, there's one you should nip in the bud: prohibit local dog owners from using the facility as a place to play fetch or get some exercise (a euphemism for activities that result in unpleasant playing conditions for athletes).

Keep a close eye on the field. Clean off litter and debris, and keep a lookout for problems like pests, weeds, drainage issues and other problems. If you see trouble brewing, address it immediately. It is easier to prevent an injury than it is to deal with the aftermath.

Oh, and one more thing, say field pros. No matter what other sports take place, there's one you should nip in the bud: prohibit local dog owners from using the facility as a place to play fetch or get some exercise (a euphemism for activities that result in unpleasant playing conditions for athletes).

Mary Helen Sprecher wrote this article on behalf of the American Sports Builders Association. Available at no charge is a listing of all publications offered by the ASBA, as well as their Membership Directory. For info, 866-501-2722 or www.sportsbuilders.org.



>> **VERT TRACK SOCCER LACROSSE STADIUM.** Photo courtesy of Medallion Athletic Products, Inc., Mooresville, NC



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By Dawn Shoemaker



Slip and fall issues always sticking around

IN DECEMBER 2005, Bill Williams sued a well-known US chain of gyms because he fell in the sauna at one of their locations. Apparently he slipped on the floor, fell on a bench and now, according to court documents, experiences “persistent neck and head pain and associated intermittent tingling feelings” in his hands.

Williams sued the gym claiming negligence and alleged that several members of the gym had warned gym managers about hazards in the sauna, indicating it was a “problem waiting to happen.” At trial, the court agreed with Williams and awarded him \$15,000 for medical costs, pain, and suffering. However, in what was considered an unexpected turn of events, an appeals court reversed the decision, stating that Williams as well as all gym members had signed a contract “expressly releasing gym management from liability due to improper maintenance.” [*Editor’s note: The names have been changed here, this is an actual occurrence and involved a Gold’s Gym.]

Although the appeals court sympathized with Williams and did believe gym management was negligent, the signed

contract by gym members superseded any compassion for the victim. Though the gym’s management may have ultimately won this case, it still cost several thousand dollars in legal fees, plus a lot of negative feelings and press that impacted the gym’s member base and the local community where the accident occurred.

And, this is just one example of a slip and fall accident. Although the statistics can vary, the number of slip and fall accidents in the US is staggering. For example, it is estimated there are about eight million slip, trip, and fall accidents each year. They occur in homes, offices, gyms, and other public facilities. Of these, about half a million people require some sort of hospitalization and more than 16,000 result in death. In fact, slip and fall accidents are considered one of the leading causes of death in the workplace. However, just as with the unfortunate case discussed earlier, many of these accidents can be prevented through preventive strategies, proper floor care, cleaning, and maintenance.

RISK FACTORS

Before venturing further, some clarifications are due. A slip is the result of too little friction or traction between footwear and the floor. Trips, on the other hand, occur when one or both feet strike or hit an object, causing loss of balance. Both slips and trips can affect your forward motion, causing your upper-body positioning to fall ahead of or behind your lower body—eventually, you lose your balance and a fall is often the result.

Slips, trips, and falls can occur just about anywhere in an office setting, school, factory, public building, and gym. A variety of

It is estimated there are about eight million slip, trip, and fall accidents each year. They occur in homes, offices, gyms, and other public facilities. Of these, about half a million people require some sort of hospitalization and more than 16,000 result in death.

JOHN MASCARO'S PHOTO QUIZ

Answers from page 17

These brown areas on sidelines of the New England Patriots practice facility are not a problem; they are a solution to a problem. Since the Patriots made it into the playoffs and Super Bowl XLVI, the practice fields needed to be maintained into the end of January 2012 and had to be protected from freezing. Since the sand-based practice fields have no underground heating system, they devised a plan to cover the fields at night with an impermeable tarp and blow hot air under the tarp with several large volume diesel fuel/electric indirect fired heaters. These heaters were connected to two large, 12-inch flexible hoses and placed under the tarp. They units worked very well and kept the soil temperatures warm, which provided better footing for the players. The brown lines are the bottoms of the heating tubes and the brown spots are from the heat being dispersed. What's interesting was how hard the ground was within a half foot of the tarp edge.

Photo submitted by Ryan McGillivray, a junior in Turfgrass Management at UMass Amherst and part-time grounds crew worker for the New England Patriots under the direction of Jon Bengtson.



If you would like to submit a photograph for John Mascaro's Photo Quiz please send it to John Mascaro, 1471 Capital Circle NW, Ste # 13, Tallahassee, FL 32303 call (850) 580-4026 or email to john@turf-tec.com. If your photograph is selected, you will receive full credit. All photos submitted will become property of SportsTurf magazine and the Sports Turf Managers Association.



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what are termed risk factors or indoor hazards can trigger an accident. Some of the most common factors and hazards include:

- Wet or oily floor surfaces
- Inappropriate footwear
- Loose, unanchored carpets, rugs, mats, or floor tiles
- Obstructed views
- Poor lighting
- Clutter on the floor
- Wrinkled carpeting
- Cables or cords laid across walkways

Gym managers should be aware of these risk hazards and regularly take the time to walk through their gym and see if any of these exist in their facilities. Corrective measures now can help prevent a serious accident later.

One of the best ways any facility, including a gym, can take to prevent a slip, trip, or fall is to install high-performing matting systems. An effective matting system is designed to trap and hold moisture, soil, grease, dirt, and other contaminants before these are walked in the door.

According to Christopher Tricozzi, vice president of sales and marketing for Crown Mats and Matting, stopping moisture and soil before it enters the door is key. "Many managers will place matting systems inside doorways, but they should actually start outdoors by installing what are termed 'scraper' mats at all building entries," he says.

Tricozzi says that the scraper mat should be followed by a wiper/scraper mat, directly inside a building. "Often, this is the entry vestibule area between two sets of doors. And, this is followed by a wiper mat, designed to capture and hold any remaining moisture and soil off shoe bottoms."

"Gym managers need about 15 feet of matting outside and inside the building," he adds. "We really can't depend on people to properly wipe their feet so the 15 feet of matting [helps] ensure that as much as 80 percent of the moisture and contaminants are prevented from being walked in the gym."

Also, as referenced earlier, Tricozzi adds that managers should select what are termed high-performance mats. These are mats that facilities typically purchase, rather than rent. Not only are these mats engineered to be more effective, they last much longer than a rental mat. "A high-performance mat may last two years or more, whereas a rental mat may only last a few months and end up in a landfill [shortly thereafter]."

FLOOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Next to eliminating risk factors and installing high-performance matting, proper floor care and maintenance is essential. Gym managers are advised to incorporate regularly scheduled strip, scrub, and refinish programs to keep floors as clean as possible. This should definitely include locker room and shower areas, where tile and grout floors are often installed. These cleaning regimens will help remove bacteria that may be developing in grout areas, which can cause a slip or fall.

Very often, the type of floor equipment used in floor care can help promote floor safety, says Daniel Frimml, a technical service representative with Tornado Industries, a manufacturer of floor care equipment. "Many facilities use rotary floor machines. While these can do an excellent job, for tile

and grout floors, a different technology, cylindrical floor machines, may prove to be more effective."

Cylindrical floor machines use counter-rotating brushes and not pads, which are found on conventional machines. Rotating at more than 1,000 rotations per minute, the brushes penetrate the porous surfaces of a floor. These machines reach deep into grout areas to help remove embedded bacteria and soil, which also helps maintain the floor's slip resistance. "Also, because the machine does a lot more of the work, less water and chemical are usually called for, making this technology Greener and more sustainable," adds Frimml.

Additionally, as to daily care, Frimml advises that gym floors should be dust-mopped or vacuumed and damp-mopped daily and sometimes several times during the day. The mop heads and cleaning solution should be changed frequently in the cleaning process to help prevent the spread of germs and bacteria which have the potential of causing floors to be slippery.

And, Frimml has one final recommendation. All gyms should have in stock and use warning and safety cones. "Whenever and wherever floors are being cleaned or there is a suspected problem that could lead to an injury, use these [safety devices]. At the very least, it can limit your liability should there be an accident and at its best, the warning and safety cones can prevent [an incident] from happening at all." ■

Dawn Shoemaker is a writer for the professional cleaning, building, hotel, and hospitality industries. She may be reached at info@alturasolutions.com

By Sandee Smith and Harrison Hill

ROLE REVERSAL: when children should talk to parents about money

AS BABY BOOMERS GROW OLDER and presumably wiser about economic matters, more are finding themselves in a position of caretaker for elderly parents. Raising the topic of money with parents can be difficult. But with the

right choice of words, timing, and tone, you can open the door to a meaningful conversation.

Select a Representative. An initial conversation about finances should be done one-on-one. Involving too many people can be

overwhelming and appear threatening. If you have siblings, select one—perhaps the oldest, most financially knowledgeable, or one with whom your parent(s) may feel most comfortable—to lead the way. Remember, this is about your parent's money, not about yours or your children's.

Be Sensitive. To some extent, our financial lives influence how we view ourselves as independent human beings. For many, old age is a time of coping with a series of physical and emotional losses: hearing, eyesight, mobility, memory, as well as friendships. With any conversation about money, be sensitive to the fears and concerns your parents may harbor about their possible loss of control or independence.

Break the Ice Skillfully. A subtle opening could involve an anecdotal story about a person you know in common, a news article found in the daily paper, or even about yourself.

- I need help with my will. Who did you use?
- How's Aunt Mary doing since Uncle Joe passed away?
- Have you seen the new Social Security statements?
- What was it like for your parents during the Great Depression?
- Did you watch that TV special on hospitals last week?

Start Slowly. Don't commence a dialogue during a crisis situation or try to resolve all details in one meeting. Raise questions that your parents can consider for a follow-up conversation. "I'll stop by

for coffee next week, and we can continue our talk. Maybe you'll have those papers by then?"

Your parents may actually enjoy the attention. After several informal conversations, you may want to consider the help of a financial professional. For more information, contact the National Council on Aging (www.ncoa.org) and AARP (www.aarp.org). ■

For More Information

If you would like to learn more, please contact Sandee Smith or Harrison Hill at 816-932-7800. You can also email sandra.j.smith@mssb.com or harrison.p.hill@mssb.com

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Top 10 turf spray equipment productivity tips

WE OFTEN HEAR FROM SPORTS TURF PROFESSIONALS that they don't ever seem to get the life out of their turf spray equipment that they would like. Common concerns: equipment wears out too soon, employees invent new and ever more creative ways to destroy equipment, equipment is down waiting for repairs, etc.

We have found that turf departments using fertilizer and weed control spray rigs can reduce problems significantly with a few easy steps. We have assembled our list of the Top 10 Spray Equipment Productivity Tips.

1 CHECK & CLEAN YOUR FILTER

Design good filtration to prevent debris from getting into your system. Debris will clog or damage pump, plumbing, fittings, hose and spray guns. It will cost you money, reduce productivity through downtime and create expensive repair bills.

Design your filtration based on your water source, type of application, sensitivity of your pump, technician skill. For example, impure water may require more than one strainer. Place filtration so it is easily accessible for technicians to check and clean. If it isn't easy, they won't check it and it will cost you dearly.

The biggest secret in spray equipment is "check your filter." There is nothing you can do with your spray equipment that will save you more money than this simple activity. We repair and replace more fertilizer and weed control spray equipment because of clogged filters than for any other reason. Conduct spot checks to ensure spray techs are cleaning filters.

2 RELEASE THE PRESSURE

Take the pressure off. When you are done spraying, release the pressure. Squeeze the handle of your spray equipment so that the system is not under pressure. If you don't want to waste the material, spray it back into the tank. Your equipment will have fewer breakdowns and will last longer if you remove the stress of constant pressure from the spray components. Never store equipment overnight under pressure.

3 DON'T USE HIGHER PRESSURE THAN NEEDED FOR THE JOB

Don't push your equipment to its limits. Our experience is that techs run power spray rigs at high speeds to get their jobs done quickly. This will reduce sprayer life. Your power spray rig can run at extremes for

short periods but it is not designed to be run full out all the time. Running "in the red" for extended periods will shorten engine and pump life. Make sure your techs know proper operating ranges. This same holds true for backpacks. Technicians often overpressure backpacks, causing damage and downtime.

4 CLEAN IT OUT

Rinse your system with clean water periodically to remove old chemical buildup, debris, etc. Chemical buildup & debris can clog your filter, starve your pump, damage spray tips, and play havoc with other components as well. All of these items fall into the category of "not good." When in doubt, rinse it out. Be sure to follow herbicide labels and laws when cleaning out spray tanks.

5 DON'T WAIT FOR FAILURE – PERFORM PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE (PM)

PM will save you time, money, equipment breakdowns, unhappy customers, etc. You are running your equipment hard and pumping strong chemicals through it. It will need service. This service will be much cheaper and less painful if you do it before you need it. Read manufacturer's recommendations then customize for your use and application. Develop a good relationship with your spray equipment provider and ask for their help.

A good preventative maintenance program is your best friend for reducing equipment down time and improving productivity. A perfect example of this is the diaphragm pumps used by many turf professionals. Many departments wait for the diaphragms to fail before replacing them. Don't wait. Replace diaphragms at the end of your busy season so you won't have problems the following year.

6 DON'T IGNORE PROBLEMS.

We are constantly amazed at the equipment problems employees will tolerate. They will continue to use leaking pumps, hose, backpacks, etc. Ignoring these problems inevitably leads to higher repair expenses and increased down time. Employees know the equipment better than you. Be sure they know to look, listen and report things that don't seem right. Encourage your employees to report problems so that you can take the appropriate action before a small problem becomes a big (i.e., expensive) problem.

7 EMERGENCY REPAIR KIT

A \$2 o-ring can cause hours of downtime. Many simple repairs can be performed by technicians in the field. Field repairs can allow the technician to finish their work before heading to the service site for more thorough repairs. You'll want to assess technicians' skill and training to determine which parts you are comfortable with technicians changing in the field. An easy example is to provide the technician with an extra o-ring for the filter.

8 PREFLIGHT CHECKLIST

Every pilot has a checklist and goes through a pre-flight routine BEFORE taking his or her plane into the air. Spray techs should do the same thing. A few minutes spent checking equipment at the start of the day can save time and money, as well as preventing downtime that hinders your ability to provide timely service. Here's the key point. If you are going to have an equipment problem, find it early, at your shop, where it is easier and cheaper to fix. Spray equipment problems get worse and more expensive. Find them sooner rather than later. Technicians should report any problems or exceptions to their supervisor.

9 TRAINING & RETRAINING

Ensure any technician using a sprayer, power or manual, thoroughly understands how to use it. Supervisors should observe the technician's operating procedures and check equipment operating pressures, filters, etc. Provide periodic retraining. Train operators to listen and observe sprayers so they can identify problems. Remember, just because you showed him (or her) how to do it on day one, doesn't mean they are still doing it the way you want.

10 AVOID FREEZE DAMAGE

Never expose sprayers to freezing temperatures. Water freezing in sprayers will burst pumps, filters, valves, fittings, spray guns, etc. Take appropriate action BEFORE the freeze. Never run frozen equipment. Let it thaw out. Often times no other repairs are required. ■

Andrew Greess is President of Quality Equipment & Spray, www.qspray.com, which builds custom landscape, fertilizer & weed spray equipment, designed for safety, reliability, ease of maintenance and productivity. Please share questions and equipment nightmares with Greess at Andrew@qspray.com. If you have comments or more suggestions, please visit our blog, www.SprayEquipmentBlog.com.

PK Products has newly designed sprayer line

PK Products has introduced a line of newly designed sprayers featuring aluminum-framed, trailer, zero-turn and ATV/UTV mounted units. Each sprayer comes standard with a premium coiled hose, deluxe handgun with adjustable tip, and self priming pumps. Tanks come standard with an easy to read liter/gallon fluid gauge and a 5-inch lid with screen and tether. Aluminum frames feature an industry leading 3-year limited warranty. PK Products offers three different sizes of aluminum trailer mounted sprayers, 25-, 40-, and 60-gallon. UTV and ATV mounted sprayers feature fast and easy spray height adjustment, without the need for additional tools.

PK Products

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Earth & Turf has introduced a grading plane to fit compact tractors.

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Earth & Turf manufactures simple, well-built products.

Earth & Turf Products, LLC



Cub Cadet string trimmers

Cub Cadet offers a selection of exceptional string trimmers that make easy work of trimming around fences, trees and flowerbeds. Here are some of their features:

- 4-cycle string trimmers have engines that are fuel-efficient, have low emissions and run quietly
- Advanced Starting Technology (AST) dramatically starts with slow, steady pulls and reduces starting effort
- Optional power start available on select models
- Bump feed head allows for continuous operation

Cub Cadet



Gravelly Stadium 80 sprayer

The versatile Gravelly Stadium 80 Sprayer includes an 80-gallon, low-profile tank that fits in the back of a utility vehicle to provide 360-degree visibility.

Equipped with a spray gun, 25-foot hose and a low-maintenance, 10-foot, three-way folding boom with electric on and off controls, the Stadium 80 sprayer is simple to operate. The lockable tank lid and anti-siphon fill prevents chemical spills, while the compact design and low center of gravity gives added stability. Operators can enjoy hours of spraying before refilling with the large 80-gallon tank.

Additional options include a 4-hp Honda GX engine with a pull start and a Hydro 12-volt engine with electric start. The Stadium 80 Sprayer is covered by Gravelly's one-year limited commercial warranty.

Ariens Company



John Deere Sprayers

The HD200 and HD300 offer a choice of centrifugal or diaphragm pumps, manual or automatic rate controls, and boom width options that come standard with electro-hydraulic lift. More versatile than a dedicated sprayer, optional storage stands allow for the sprayer to be removed in minutes without tools, freeing up the ProGator to be used for other tasks. The optional CleanLoad chemical eductor makes it easy to load chemicals by ensuring that every last drop is used, and a powerful jet agitator makes sure the tank solution is mixed thoroughly. An efficient valve bank design simplifies operation and plumbing, while standard triple nozzle bodies make nozzle changes effortless. Controls are mounted at the operator's fingertips and can be removed without tools for storage.

John Deere



6000 Series Hose Reel ideal for Grounds Maintenance

Hannay Reels' 6000 Series power or manual rewind reel is constructed with materials and finish that can stand up to the abuse from corrosive fertilizers, pesticides and other hazardous materials. Equipped with a manual gear-driven crank rewind or a chain and sprocket drive with a hydraulic, electric, or compressed air motor, this heavy-duty reel efficiently handles long lengths of hose payed out over extensive areas.

Hannay Reels



Portable soil moisture probe

The new SM150-Kit portable soil moisture probe offers accuracy with cost savings, and can be used in all types of soils and artificial medias. Engineered for reliability and high performance, the SM150-Kit is well suited for research, greenhouse irrigation scheduling, golf or sports turf, or agricultural applications. The SM150-Kit includes the SM150 sensor and the HH150 readout, with calibrations for organic and mineral type soils. The SM150 sensor (sold separately) can also be used with data loggers or added to other soil moisture logging systems, for continuous soil moisture monitoring.

Dynamax, Inc.



BioSafe Systems announces new ZeroTol 2.0

BioSafe Systems introduces ZeroTol 2.0 Algaecide/Fungicide. The new labeling provides an updated active ingredient statement, an increased number of controlled pathogens, and new labeling instructions for the treatment of artificial turf. ZeroTol 2.0 is used to treat and control plant pathogens on ornamental plants and turf. ZeroTol 2.0's active ingredients include 27% hydrogen peroxide and 2% peroxyacetic Acid. Due to its fast acting oxidation process, mutational resistance of harmful organisms is not possible. ZeroTol 2.0 is available in 2.5, 30, 55, and 275 gallon sizes.

BioSafe Systems, LLC



F.O.Y.

Field of the Year

Ashley Ridge High School Softball Field, Summerville, SC

Level of Submission: Schools/Parks

Category of Submission: Softball

Head Sports Turf Manager:

Bobby Behr

Title: Athletic Director

Education: Master's Degree

Field of Study: Education Leadership

I was named the athletic director of a new high school and immediately applied to take an independent study course on the Principles of Turfgrass Management offered by the Professional Landcare Network and The University of Georgia. I am responsible for 85 acres of school grounds.

Full Time Staff: Adam Davis



I must also mention the fact that we have four alligators in this pond that migrated in from the surrounding swamp.

THE SWAMP

Original construction date: 2007

Size: 44,000 sq. ft.

Total hours used: 340

Variety(s) of turfgrass(es): Celebration bermudagrass

Overseed: Prior to overseeding we verticut and sweep the field.

I hire an outside company to perform this. We overseed with a perennial ryegrass, Interlude, at a rate of 600lbs per acre. We use a starter fertilizer of 18-24-12 at a rate of 200lbs per acre. We apply the rye in one direction on the first application, then come back 3 days later and apply the second round in the opposite direction which gives a cross hatch planting to the field.

Drainage: French drain every 10 feet

I added more biostimulants, soil conditioners, and we installed the crushed brick warning track which doubled my maintenance cost for 2011. We installed a 10-foot wide warning track around the entire perimeter of the field. The track was composed of crushed brick and we used 50 tons of material. We had to move 17 sprinkler heads away from the fence, 10 feet across the warning track, to the edge of the new grass line. My sports turf class performed the work on spreading the crushed brick and moving the sprinkler heads. We hired a third party to move the brick with a Bobcat onto the warning track. This new addition added 30 hours of labor our yearly total of 430 in 2011. The softball field will go completely unattended during the off season from last year because we do not have a sports turf class this year. I have gone through

three teachers in 3 years. The first two could not handle class room management and left education totally. The last teacher was moved to the district office as a science interventionist for the district. Adam works on the fields alone. I have several student volunteers this year who help, but are limited in there ability to run equipment.

Adam is also my football equipment manager and must be at all the football practices and games. With only two of us working on the fields we just don't have enough time to keep up with the baseball and softball until fall sports are over. We must, unfortunately, use a triage approach to management. Adam keeps the grass cut, but does not have time to work on the skinned area and warning track.

I also encountered a problem with my central irrigation system that feeds our fields from a 3-acre pond. I noticed the fields were turning brown and started a check procedure to see what was wrong. My pump was not working so I knew the problem had to be with the intake valve. I discovered that we had a problem with water weeds clogging the 4-inch intake valve and shutting our pump down. I had to don my chest wadders and have two of my students follow me into the pond in a 14-foot john boat. Adam Davis was my "Bay Watch" lifeguard in the event I went under. I must also mention the fact that we have four alligators in this pond that migrated in from the surrounding swamp. When I went in they came up within 20 yards to watch me. My kids in the boat were scared I would turn it over and they would fall out and get

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eaten by the gators (I am the one in the water and they are scared!). They had their cell phones out taking pictures of the gators and texting it to friends. I eventually changed the intake valve which had totally collapsed due to the weeds around it. This happened two times in one month, at a cost of \$640 each time, which led to me hiring a pond maintenance person who applies chemicals twice a month to keep the weeds down.

We have Hunter sprinkler heads (I-35's) on all of our fields. I again noticed the fields turning brown in circular patterns and discovered that the heads were not rotating 360 degrees. I had to change out eight of the heads on the main part of the baseball field throughout the summer. I turned the old heads in to the vendor I



bought them from and was given new heads. Hunter sent a representative from California to investigate the problem and determined that the heads were faulty.

SportsTurf: How did you educate yourself about improving and maintaining your fields?

Behr: When I was named the Athletic Director I went online

to try and find a correspondence course in turf management. The University of Georgia offered a professional certificate in turf so I enrolled. I had to get the head of my guidance department, Pat Tolliver, to proctor the two exams required. It took me several months to get through the course, which was like an Advanced Placement Biology class. This gave me the book knowledge I needed and confidence to jump into an agrarian area that was somewhat overwhelming. I also had Dr. Bert McCarty, a turf professor at Clemson University, on speed dial, and he was a tremendous help.

SportsTurf: What are your specific responsibilities for field maintenance, if any? What do find most enjoyable? What task is your least favorite and why?

Behr: My responsibilities are to make the turf green by applying the fertilizers and products that will accomplish the task. This includes analyzing soil samples with Bill Scribner who helps me balance the pH issues with the agronomic problems to select the proper fertilizers and nutrients that will build the strongest root-zone. My sports grounds manager, Adam Davis, is responsible for cutting, painting, striping, watering, and the skinned areas. Adam also is responsible for the PCI charting. I find the most joy in watching my field turn a luscious green and then how Adam can stripe the patterns into the field. The kids truly love to play on our fields too.

My least favorite task, as well as Adam's, is bringing the field back from the dead each spring. We do not have the manpower to keep up with the field during softball's off season. Adam has to sod cut all the edges, hand dig and rake the crushed brick warning track where the grass has grown in, bring clay into the skinned area and edge all the lines. This process takes several weeks and we will bring Steve Weaver, grounds maintenance, Gage Holsey, Ivan Moreno, and Grant Opolus who are student volunteers, in to help with this mammoth project.

SportsTurf: Did you have to get creative in finding the budget to implement the improvements that led to this award?

Behr: I am given \$35,000 to cover all 85 acres of school grounds. My district maintenance director, Rick Rogers, will help me in purchasing sand and renting equipment to topdress, aerate, and verticut. My principal, Karen Radcliffe, will help me with funding from her general account if I need assistance. My Superintendent, Joe Pye, has been great in allowing me to purchase the right equipment to manage the fields. I bring in Alan Wilson, a CSFM, to do heavy topdressing, verticut, and sweep the fields twice a year.

SportsTurf: What changes, if any, are you considering or implementing for the winning field in 2012?

Behr: We built a crushed brick warning track and moved 17 sprinkler heads last year. This year we have relocated the quick connect coupling from behind the pitcher's mound to the warning track. The sheer amount of work that we must do at the beginning of the season is equivalent to rebuilding a softball field each year. We are currently having issues with our irrigation water that is high in sodium. Amending the soil and keeping my grass alive is my biggest concern for this year. ■